



# NEWS RELEASE

OFFICE OF THE UNITED STATES ATTORNEY  
WESTERN DISTRICT OF MISSOURI

**TODD P. GRAVES**

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**AUGUST 1, 2005**  
**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

OPERATION COCAINE HIGHWAY  
**EIGHT DEFENDANTS INDICTED FOR**  
**COCAINE TRAFFICKING**

**SPRINGFIELD, Mo.** – Todd P. Graves, United States Attorney for the Western District of Missouri, announced today that eight defendants have been indicted by a federal grand jury for distributing cocaine in the Taney County, Mo., area. Two separate indictments are the result of Operation Cocaine Highway, a multi-jurisdictional investigation into the importation and distribution of powder cocaine.

Operation Cocaine Highway, Graves explained, resulted in two federal indictments, which were returned under seal by a federal grand jury in Springfield on July 8, 2005. Those indictments were unsealed and made public today upon the arrest and initial court appearance of three of the defendants.

**U.S. v. Marco Antonio Hernandez-Islas, et al**

**Marco Antonio Hernandez-Islas**, also known as The Chicken, 33, **Rogelio Garduno-Bustos**, 34, **Tayde Garduno-Bustos**, also known as Coco, 36, **Ruben D. Garduno-Bustos**, 29, **Manuela Garcia-Lujan**, 39, all citizens of Mexico who were living in Branson at the time of the alleged offenses, **Osvaldo Lerma, Jr.**, 32, also of Branson, and **Ribogerto Zepeda**, 28, address unknown, were charged in a 15-count superseding indictment. This indictment replaces the original indictment that was returned on June 2, 2005, in which **Hernandez-Islas** is the sole defendant.

**Rogelio Garduno-Bustos** and **Tayde Garduno-Bustos** were arrested today, Graves said. **Rogelio Garduno-Bustos** and **Manuela Garcia-Lujan** are resident aliens with pending applications for citizenship to the United States. **Rogelio Garduno-Bustos**, **Tayde Garduno-Bustos** and **Ruben D. Garduno-Bustos** are brothers.

Count One of the federal indictment alleges that all seven co-defendants participated in a conspiracy to distribute cocaine from April 25, 2002, to April 1, 2003, in Taney County.

Count Two of the federal indictment alleges that **Lerma** distributed cocaine on April 25, 2002, in Taney County.

Count Three of the federal indictment alleges that **Garcia-Lujan** distributed cocaine on June 26, 2002, in Taney County.

Count Four of the federal indictment alleges that **Ruben D. Garduno-Bustos** distributed cocaine on July 24, 2002, in Taney County.

Count Five of the federal indictment alleges that **Rogelio Garduno-Bustos** and **Ruben D. Garduno-Bustos** distributed cocaine on Sept. 6, 2002, in Taney County.

Count Six of the federal indictment alleges that **Rogelio Garduno-Bustos** distributed cocaine on Sept. 12, 2002, in Taney County.

Count Seven of the federal indictment alleges that **Lerma** and **Zepeda** distributed cocaine on Nov. 20, 2002, in Taney County.

Counts Eight and Nine of the federal indictment allege that **Rogelio Garduno-Bustos** and **Tayde Garduno-Bustos** distributed cocaine on Nov. 25 and Dec. 2, 2002, respectively in Taney County.

Count Ten of the federal indictment alleges that **Rogelio Garduno-Bustos** and **Tayde Garduno-Bustos** distributed cocaine on Jan. 24, 2002, in Taney County.

Counts Eleven, Twelve and Fifteen of the federal indictment allege that **Hernandez-Islas** distributed cocaine on Feb. 16, Feb. 21, and April 1, 2003, respectively, in Taney County.

Counts Thirteen and Fourteen of the federal indictment allege that **Garcia-Lujan** distributed cocaine on March 29 and April 1, 2003, respectively, in Taney County.

### **U.S. v. Aaron Nino-Sanchez**

**Aaron Nino-Sanchez**, 27, a citizen of Mexico living in Commerce, Okla., was charged in an indictment returned by a federal grand jury on July 8, 2005, with distributing cocaine on April 8, 2003, in Newton County, Mo.

**Nino-Sanchez** was arrested today, Graves said.

Graves cautioned that the charges contained in these two indictments are simply accusations, and not evidence of guilt. Evidence supporting the charges must be presented to a federal trial jury, whose duty is to determine guilt or innocence.

These cases are being prosecuted by Assistant U.S. Attorney Robyn L. McKee. There were investigated by COMET (the Combined Ozarks Multi-jurisdictional Enforcement Team), the Drug Enforcement Administration, the Bureau of Immigration and Customs Enforcement, the Springfield, Mo., Police Department and the Taney County, Mo., Sheriff's Department.

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This news release, as well as additional information about the office of the United States Attorney for the Western District of Missouri, is available on-line at

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